

Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN SS-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL ALEXANDRIA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 088766

EXDIS, TOSEC 88

FOLLOWING REPEAT TUNIS 2587 ACTION SECSTATE 30 APR 74

QTE

S E C R E T TUNIS 2587

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, TS

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE VISIT OF PRESIDENT NIXON TO MIDDLE EAST

NEA FOR LANE

1. DURING COURSE OF MY MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER CHATTI APRIL 29, HE REPORTED RUMOR THAT PRESIDENT NIXON WOULD STOP OFF IN ALGIERS ENROUTE TO CAIRO. HE COMMENTED EN PASSANT THAT HE HOPED, IN VIW OF TRAD TIONAL CLOSE US-TUNISIAN RELATIONSHIP, THAT PRESIDENT WOULD ALSO VISIT TUNIS. I MADE NO COMMENT OTHER THAN TO SAY THAT I HAD NO INFORMATION RE POSSIBLE PRESIDENTIAL VISIT TO MIDDLE EAST.

2. YOU ARE AWARE OF COURSE OF TUNISIAN SENSITIVITY LAST FALL WHEN SECRETARY KISSINGER MADE STOPOVER IN RABAT
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WITHOUT PLANNING FOLLOW-UP VISIT TO TUNIS. SECRETARY'S

SUBSEQUENT DECISION TO COME HERE REASSURED
PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA OF IMPORTANT U.S. ATTACHES TO TUNISIAN
RELATIONSHIP AND OF OUR APPRECIATION FOR WAY HE
HAS STOOD BY US OVER THE YEARS. IN CASE OF POSSIBLE
VISIT BY PRESIDENT NIXON TO ALGIERS I DO NOT RPT NOT
THINK THAT WE SHOULD BE UNDULY CONCERNED BY TUNISIAN
SENSITIVITY. BOUMEDIENE DOES AFTER ALL REPRESENT IMPORTANT
LEADER IN NON-ALIGNED WORLD AND ONE WHO MIGHT HAVE SOME
IMPACT ON SYRIA AND IRAQ IN CONTEXT ARAB-ISRAELI NEGOTIA-
TIONS. AS LONG AS PRESIDENT NIXON DOES NOT RPT NOT GOT O
RABAT, I BELIEVE SKIPPING TUNIS WOULD BE MANAGEABLE IN TERMS
OUR RELATIONSHIP, GIVEN PRESIDENT'S LIMITED TIME.

3. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT WOULD NOT WELCOME VISIT TO
TUNIS BY PRESIDENT NIXON OR THAT SUCH VISIT WOULD NOT
RPT NOT MAKE VERY POSITIVE IMPACT HERE.
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